

London Society's Problem—Smoking in the Theater



NO more! The tantalizing, drink-driving, super-refined cruelty of the play—a play—no more! Wherefore London smiles. And smiles.

The play in which the young men place beautiful Egyptian cigaret between their lips, light them leisurely and, sinking into easy chairs, blow out clouds of the sweetest smoke before the very eyes of their victims—no more!

For such, explain those who wouldn't have it, is the essence of cruelty. In other words it's a situation for a cigarette smoker, held in bonds of convention, to sit calmly and watch nicotine vapors curl round his ears; vapors puffed by someone else.

Wherefore, London is smoking in the theaters. London is loiling luxuriously in its boxes, between its fingers a steam-

ing coffee-suff, and this, blue smoke rings wreathing its head. And he of the suave smile and debonnaire eye, who lizards round the stage drawing-room—he is smoking with, not at, his audience.

It's all because of the war. As Sir George Alexander remarked, smoking is allowed almost everywhere now. Ladies do not leave the dinner table when the men begin to smoke, and when they go to the drawing-room they often take their cigarettes with them. Furthermore, says Sir George, during the abnormal period, the removal of every restriction possible upon those who cater to the public is wise.

"There is no reason," he explained, "why smoking should not be allowed in the theater. However, I do not believe the striking of matches nor the puffing of smoke is desirable during a serious play or any play which has a consecutive interest. I would not hesitate to introduce it, nevertheless, if

thereby one hundred dollars per night could be added to the receipts. At such a time as this it is entirely a commercial question."

However, the sudden consent of the Lord Chamberlain to smoking in London theaters has settled a controversy which raged furiously before the war when there was nothing more serious to talk about. Lord Sandhurst, whose hand struck from the theater license the word which lifted the ban, warned managers that the change being only temporary—while the war lasts as it were—must be regarded in the nature of an experiment. He says something further about taking advantage of it only for suitable plays. Whereupon rises the question of what kind of play suits smoking?

The general feeling seems to be that darkest tragedies must not be lightened by the striking of matches, while the less serious plays may be helped out with nicotine. Mr. H. R.

Irving suggests that the change be applied to revues.

"I should certainly not like to play a very long part in an atmosphere full of smoke—Hamlet for instance. I don't think it would be possible," he says.

But from the smoker's point of view, smoking even at a serious play is an advantage. Says one of 'em:

"Smoking during Ibsen, for instance, may have its drawbacks, but could anything be more mind destroying than the lady, known to most of us, who noisily divests a large and luscious chocolate of its rustling golden coat during the third act soul storm?"

Even so. And while the discussion slips round and round, the playgoer betakes himself to the play with pipe, cigar or cigarette and, according to the quality of the tobacco, asphyxiates the villain at will. Lily clear and cold the London theaters and smokeless—no more!

Vernon and Irene



Some Say It's a Case of Too Much Money.

Again—Have They Separated Domestically?

which, unlike absence, doesn't make the heart grow fonder. Others say there isn't any such thing—save in the mind of Gladwyn MacDougall, managing-director and press representative for the Castle household.

Being which as it may, the Castles have separated. They aren't going to dance together any more. Whether that's all or not—this time—gossip hasn't found out yet. But it's a bona fide separation; letters of farewell, and everything. Irene has gone to Washington to the "Watch Your Step" Company. Vernon has gone to war. At least he's gone to San Diego, where he is going to learn to be an aviator before enlisting in the British Flying Corps, where he'll remain until the end of the war. He left the "Watch Your Step" Company the last night it played in Boston, and although he is said to be the thinnest man in the world, Irene promptly engaged two men to take his place: Olin Finney, who is said to have invented the "fish walk" two years ago, to do the dancing, and Bernard Granville to do the acting.

Were Vernon and Irene separating for keeps? Oh my, how angry he became when someone said something like that! Wasn't he going away merely because duty called him; because every breast which holds a British heart should be bare to the enemy's bullets? Besides, hadn't he a perfectly good copy of a telegram he'd sent the aforementioned wife no later than a day ago, in which he wired her all his loved along with the tenderly applied term, "darling," and assured her that whatever happened, she'd be successful? Anything savoring of apprehension, he explained, was occasioned by her new partner's tendency to tread on her toes, a fault irksome and disagreeable to any lady.

Still he admitted later to being a bit tired of dancing. "Vain pumps and glory of this world, I hate ye," sentiment.

He went out in a blaze of glory, however. Ere laying aside his diaphanous shirt and poetic cravat, he gave a dinner to the "Watch Your Step" Company, at which he remembered with necklaces each girl in the pony ballet and presented the drummer with a \$150 drum, and gave to J. C. Riggby, manager, a pear-shaped watch with a sapphire stem.

Vernon will rehearse with Glen Martin for a month over the western lowlands. He hopes to originate a number of dips, glides and whirls which will bring general stupefaction to the various enemies when they try to bring him down. Also he'll practice bomb-dropping on the Pacific coast, so when he makes his debut as a high-flyer on the other side he will hit the mark.

He says—she says—rumor says—who's telling the truth? Anyway, Castles are in the air.



Were Vernon and Irene Separating for Keeps?

Have Your Voice Photographed! But It's No Use If You Sucked Your Thumb



HAVE you had your voice photographed lately? Oh, yes, quite the thing now. All you do is light a candle, and talk or sing. The candle is what does it; throws on the plate a picture of your tones and overtones, and if they're not according to all that they should be, there's something the matter with your voice.

Dr. Shirley Gandell, of Chicago, explains that the ideal human voice, like a note of the piano, consists not of a single sound, but of the fundamental tone and eight overtones. It is the upper overtones, says he, which make a voice beautiful.

And as a candle flame may be made to flicker differently, according to the pitch of the sound to which it is exposed, the same pitch will always cause the same sort of a change in the flame.

"It has been demonstrated that certain uses of the vocal organs deform the voice in certain ways," Dr. Gandell explained. "This takes in a long step toward a true method of voice culture. As the singing and the speaking voices are essentially the same, the same training may make a man a good speaker and a good singer."

Or have you had your throat photographed? That's another perfectly proper proceeding right now. The photographer uses a set of tubes, lights and prisms. By

their aid he manages to make a two-reel film thriller entitled "John H. Jones Rectifying the Declaration of Independence With a Cold in the Head."

The apparatus makes it possible to photograph the vocal cords in use. The throat and voice specialist can tell from the negative what is wrong with the system of articulation the patient with the unsatisfactory voice is using.

Or have you had taken an impression of your teeth? Just another way of getting a line on your voice. Because the teeth determine the shape of the mouth and of the resonance cavities just below the eyes, they tell the story of the voice, it is said. When your baby teeth refuse to forsake you when they should, you're likely to develop some kind of

husk or squeak to your voice; on the other hand too early loss of the baby teeth is deplorable, as they push the others forward and secure perfect contour for the jaws, without which a rich, musical voice is impossible.

If you sucked your thumb as an infant, you're voice is probably hopeless. Such infantile relaxation causes malformation of the upper jaw and destroys overtones—vital part of musical speech.

It is said that teachers of English are asking for a greater co-operation from singing teachers, throat specialists and dentists in their work of improving the American voice.

However, if your voice doesn't suit you, have it photographed. Then you can tell what is the matter with it. Dr. Floyd S. Mackay, of Columbia University, discovered the system.